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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Joan Izyberg DATE 12/23/81
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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6379
INFO CINCPAC

S E C R E T SAIGON 5152

EXDIS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH POLITICAL COUNSELOR SEPT 7, FOREIGN MINISTER DO COMMENTED ABOUT CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION.

2. DO REMARKED THAT THE RESULTS OF THE PRESIDENTIAL AND UPPER HOUSE ELECTIONS GIVE A DISPORPORTIONATE REPRESENTATITION TO THE FOLLOWING THREE ELEMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM: 1) CATHOLICS, 2) MILITARY, 3) NORTH AND CENTRAL VIETNAMESE. HE ASCRIBED THE NOTABLE SUCCESS IN THE SENATE BY THE CATHOLICS TO THEIR EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION AND DISCIPLINED VOTE AND SAID THERE WAS A REAL LESSON IN THESE ELECTIONS FOR THE BUDDHISTS WHO HAD BEEN DIVIDED, DISORGANIZED, AND, IN BRIEF, POLITICALL INEFFICTIVE.

(1)

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D CITED AS AN EXAMPLE THE FACT THAT HE HAD HAD INCICATIONS OF SUPPORT DURING THE CAMPAIGN FROM TRI QUANG, THIEN MINH, AND TAM CHAU BUT ANY RESULTS IN TERMS OF VOTES HAD BEEN INSIGNIFICANT. DO SAID THAT IN HIS OPINION MOST OF THE OTHER CANDIDATES REPRESENTED EITHER ONLY THEMSELVES AND A FEW FOLLOWERS, OR FRAGMENTED GROUPS REPRESENTING OUTDATED POLITCAL

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ALLIANCES. HE ASSERTED THAT POLITICAL ACTIVITY GENERALLY NEEDS TO BE ENTIRELY REVAMPED IN VIETNAM AND THAT THE BUDDHISTS SHOULD BE THE FIRST TO REALIZE IT AND TO SEEK TO UNIFY THEIR FORCES. DO REMARKED THAT THE PRINCIPAL BUDDHIST LEADERS WERE INTERESTED CHIEFLY IN THEIR OWN POSITIONS AND IN PROJECTS TO SUPPORT INDIVIDUAL PAGODAS AND OTHER SUCH PAROCHIAL MATTERS. DO SAID THAT THE ELEIONS FOR THE LOWER HOUSE WOULD BE QUITE DIFFERENT SINCE THE MEMBERS WILL BE ELECTED FROM INDIVIDUAL CONSTITUENCIES AND MORE DIVERSE FACTORS WOULD AFFECT THE VOTE. HE THOUGHT THE LOWER HOUSE WOULD PREPRESENT A MUCH BROADER SPECTRUM OF VIETNAMESE SOCIETY.

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3. DO WENT ON TO SAY THAT THE ONE FACT THAT WAS CLEARLY EVIDENT FROM THE PRESIDENTIAL AND SENATE ELECTIONS WAS THAT THE SELCTION OF A PRIME MINISTER WAS POLITICALLY NARROWED TO PERSONS WHO MET THE FOLLOWING QUALIFICATIONS: 1) BUDDHIST, 2) CIVILIAN, 3) SOUTHERN, 4) COMPETENT AND EXPERIECNED. DO RAPIDLY ELIMINATED NGUYEN VAN LOC ON GROUNDS OF THE FOURTH FACTOR. E SAID HE HAD NO IDEA WHO GENERAL THIEU WAS CURRENTLY CONSIDERING, BUT HE ASSUMED THAT HIS NAME WAS ONE THAT WOULD COME UP FOR CONSIDERATION.

4. DO AGREED THAT THERE WAS AN URGEN NEED FOR A DYNAMIC NEW POLICY AND PROGRAM BY THE GOVERNMENT TO ATTRACT BROOD SUPPORT FROM ELEMENTS THAT MIGHT OTHERWISE BECOME DISAFFECTED. HE DISCOUNTED THE OPPOSITION AND NOISE BY TRUONG DINH DZU AND SOME OF THE OTHER DISAPPOINTED CANDIDATES AND SAID, IN RESPONSE TO A QUERY, THAT HE WAS CONFIDENT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD TAKE NO ILL-CONSIDERED AND HASTY ACTION AGAINST DZU.

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DO ALSO DISCOUNTED THE IMPORTANCE OF HA THUC KY, SAYING THAT HE REPRESENTED A VERY NARROWLY REGIONAL AND PARTY GROUP THAT WAS CHARACTERISTIC OF EARLIER VIETNAMESE POLITICS BUT NOT SUITED TO WHAT THE COUNTRY NOW NEEDED. POLITICAL COUNSELOR SAID THAT HE ALSO BELIEVED THAT A BROADLY BASED GOVERNMENT

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AND AN EARLY AND DYNAMIC STATEMENT OF POLICY WERE NEEDED TO ATTRACT SUPPORT.

5. POLTICIAL COUNSELOR RAISED QUESTION OF PEACE INITIATIVES SUGGESTED BY GENERAL THIEU DURING THE CAMPAIGN. DO REITERATED THAT HE THOUGHT IT HAD BEEN WRONG TO PUT A TIME LIMITE ON ANY PROPOSAL FOR A BOMBING PAUSE. HE COULD SEE ADVANTAGE IN ENENTUALLYMAKING SOME PROPOSAL FOR A BOMBING PUSE BUT THOUGHT THAT IT SHOULD ONLY FOLLOW ON A CONCENTRATED ANDSUCCESSFUL SRIES OF ATTACKS ON MAJOR MILITARY AND COMMUNICATIONS TARGETS IN THE NORTH. HE ALSO CONSIDERED THAT IS SHOULD NOT HAVE A SHORT DEADLINE, SUCH AS ONE WEEK, BUT SHOULD BE LEFT OPEN IN ORDER TO GIVE US MAXIMUM FLEXIBILITY. POLITICAL COUNSELOR SAID HE THOUGHT IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT BEFORE ANY FURTHER PUBLIC INITIATIVE- ,R PROPOSALS WERE MADE BY THE GVN, THERE SHOULD BE FULL PRIVATE CONSULATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO GOVERNMNETS. DO SAID HE ENTIRELY AGREED.

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6. DO ALSO COMMENTED THAT HE UNDERSTOOD AMBASSADOR BUI DIEM WOULD PROBABLY RETURN TO VIETNAM NEXT WEEK.

7. COMMENT: DO IS OBVIOUSLY FOLLOWING THE POLITICAL SITUATION CLOSELY AND ASSUMES THAT HE WILL BE SOMEHOW INVOLVED IN THE NEW GOVERNMENT. THIS SEEMS FAIRLY LIKELY IN VIEW OF HIS CONN- EETIONS WITH GENERAL THIEU AND HIS BROTHERS KIEU AND HIEU, ALTHOUGH THE PRIME MINISTER SEEMS UNLIKELY AND HE IS UNDOUBTEDLY BETTER SUITED TO HIS PRESENT PORTFOLIO. DO SAID THAT AS A MATTER OF FACT HE HAD ONLY RUN FOR THE SZMWTZHBECAQSE HE HAD THOUGHT THAT PRIME MINISTER KY WOULD BE THEPRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE AND HE DID NOT FEEL THAT HE COULD CONTINUE TO SERVE IN THE KY GOVERNMENT. HE OBVIOUSLY CONSIDERS THAT A THIEU GOVERNMENT WITH KY AS VICE BRESIDENT I AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT MATTER.
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